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this family
home in
London*



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THE OWNERS

David and Juliana Wheeler, and David's children Perrin, Oliver and Emma (far left)

OCCUPATIONS

David is a banker, and Juliana works in financial PR

FAVOURITE ROOM

'The Arizona/TV room,' says Juliana. 'The skylight and the double doors make the room very light. It's so comfortable and relaxing.'

1 To create an air of elegance, David and Juliana widened the doorway leading from the hall into the dining room. The stylish radiator is from Bisque (020 7209 9144)

2 In the dining room, Albrissi (020 7730 6119) supplied the ornate mirror and bamboo-wood table. The chairs came from Heal's (020 7896 7451) and are covered in calico



THE PROPERTY

LOCATION Central London

BUILDING Georgian townhouse, built in 1802

ROOMS Hall, sitting room, dining room, library, office, TV room, kitchen/breakfast room, cloakroom, 3 bedrooms (1 en suite), dressing room, bathroom, loft bedroom

MOVED IN 2002

Americans David and Juliana Wheeler had been renting a mews house in Greater London before they married. 'I decided that it was too suburban for a city girl from New York,' says Juliana, 'and so we decided that, as we were getting married very soon, we would look for a more central house to buy.'

The couple started looking around and it didn't take them very long to find the late-Georgian townhouse they now share with David's children Perrin, 19, Oliver, 17, and Emma, 12. 'The decor wasn't to our taste but we could see the house's potential and

thought we could make this a happy home for our new life together,' says Juliana.

During the 19th century, the house was home to different tradesmen working in and around Westminster. 'We commissioned a history of the place,' says David, 'and found out that there was once a bakery in the basement. Then it was owned by a glovemaking, and in 1880, 16 people lived here at once.'

David and Juliana stayed in their old home for the first five months while renovation work was being done. 'We'd often come here for site meetings, though,' says David. The couple finally moved in just before ►



LONDON townhouse

'Our first real home'

To celebrate their impending marriage David and Juliana Wheeler moved into a new house in central London and made it the perfect place for themselves and their children

Words GEORGIEWOOD Photography ROBERT SANDERSON





'THE HOUSE USED TO BE A BAKERY'



2

1, 2 & 3 A 13th-century brass Buddha, bought at auction at Christie's (020 7839 9060) sits on a lace-wood shelf in the sitting room. 'He looks over us and brings us good feelings and luck,' says David. The sofas were from Interiors Bis (020 7838 1104). The suede cubes came from Ocean (0870 242 6283). Acquisition Fireplaces (020 7482 2949) supplied the fireplace insert

3



They got married. To accommodate the children, David decided to completely rearrange the layout – merging two bathrooms into one, and creating bedrooms for Oliver and Merrin, plus a bedroom in the loft for Emma.

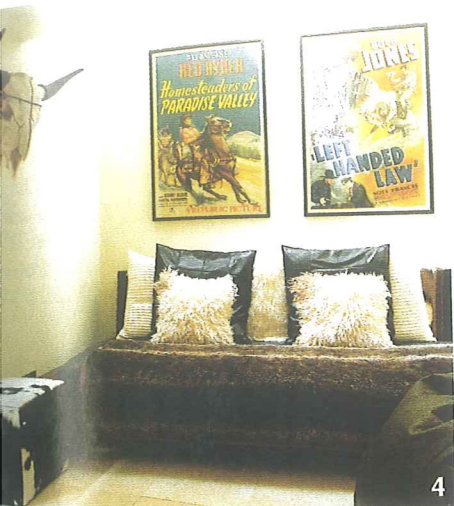
The original fanlight over the front door had been removed but an authentic-looking modern replacement was found and fitted. This now allows light to flood into the hall.

The doorway from the hall to the dining room was widened and heightened, and double doors with inlay borders of tulip wood and wengewood were installed. 'David likes Chinese art,' says Juliana, 'and decided to find a Chinese screen to set into the wall at the side of one door. I went on a mission to find one screen – and found two.' Installing them was difficult, as the beam over the doors had to be raised and the walls had to be rebuilt slowly around the screens.'

One of David and Juliana's favourite features is the stunning flooring that has been laid in both the sitting room and dining room, which is made of lace wood cut from London plane trees. 'Because of the way the wood has been cut,' says David, 'if you view the wood from a particular angle it resembles lace and is very beautiful.'

Doors to the sitting room and library were removed. The wooden floors take the eye across the sitting room to the library, giving a feeling of space and continuity. 'We now have an elegant and comfortable entertaining space,' says David. The Wheelers also wanted storage for their growing collection of porcelain and Oriental works of art. 'We had maple and wengewood bookcases made, with lighting and mirrors behind, which show off our collection beautifully.'

The cherrywood kitchen cabinets were already there and in good condition, ►



4



5

4 Sheepskin cushions and a faux-fur throw cover the daybed in the TV room. Ocean supplied the cowhide cube. Log on

to www.filmposterworld.co.uk for a wide range of film posters

5 Cherrywood units with black granite

worktops give the kitchen a practical yet warm look. Kirkstone (015394 33296) can offer a variety of limestone floor tiles

6 The Conran Shop (020 7589 7401) supplied the birch table and seagrass chairs in the open-plan breakfast room



6

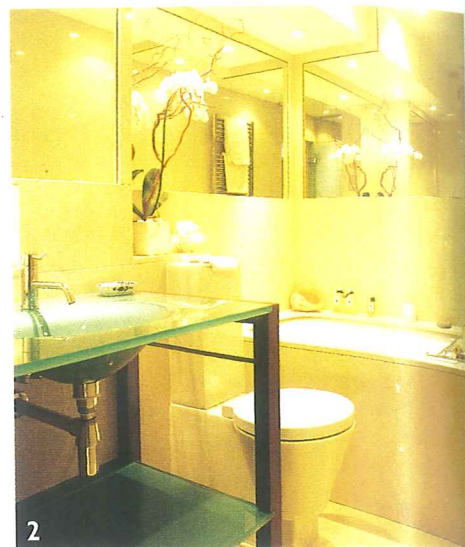


1 The bench at the end of the master bed was picked up at Snap Dragon (020 7376 8889). The bedside lamps were supplied by Valerie Wade (020 7225 1414)

bought from Axola (020 8420 1123). Vitruvius (020 7223 8209) can supply similar-style marble

3 Perrin's room has neutral colours and natural textures. The hamper came from Oka (0870 160 6002)

2 In the en suite, the Italian glass basin was



although some were removed for an American-sized refrigerator to be fitted in. The black granite worktops and limestone flooring were also a definite plus. 'We changed around the open-plan breakfast room and built the banquette,' says David. 'We have casual meals here. We also bought barstools for drinking cocktails.'

The TV room echoes the Wild West. It features a stool made out of cowhide and leather and sheepskin cushions. Lining the walls are vintage cowboy movie posters, as well as a skeletal buffalo's head. 'I grew up in Arizona,' says David, 'and my family still lives there. We even have a branding iron with a 'W' on it – a present from my brother.'

The couple describe their style as eclectic. 'We have a lot of Chinese antiques, which have a timeless look and blend nicely with our contemporary taste,' says Juliana. They redid the lighting in almost every room and installed hi-tech speakers for the stereo and flat-screen TVs. 'We turned the house into a contemporary but comfortable home to start our new life together,' Juliana adds.

Upstairs, the couple transformed a small guest room into a dressing room, allowing cupboard space in the master bedroom to be knocked out, creating a much more spacious

room. Although the en-suite bathroom had been newly refurbished, David and Juliana started again, using large slabs of cream marble for the bath panel and walls to complement a contemporary glass basin. Mirrors reflect the recessed lighting and brighten the room.

Three years on, David and Juliana are finally settled in their new environment. 'It's our first home together as a married couple,' says Juliana, 'and we just love it.' **DI**

DAVID & JULIANA'S STYLE SECRETS

The couple's London townhouse is filled with fine furniture. One of their favourite sources is **The Conran Shop** (020 7589 7401, www.conran.com)

This Ned suede upholstered cube, available in a selection of colours, £245, can be used as practical seating or as a side table.



LAST WORD

'If you can, fit a fireplace. With the one in the sitting room, we burn wood fires in the winter,' says Juliana. 'This gives a great ambience and creates a wonderful focal point.'



Make a statement in the centre of a room with this Modulus sofa, from £3,090, plus 13m of fabric.

An original design from the 1950s, this Cherner chair in solid beech and walnut is a character piece, £895.

